Extension Cord Safety

Own the EDGE
Leading on the Edge

An extension cord can be a handy, temporary way to place electrical equipment wherever you'd like it. But if used improperly, extension cords can cause fire and injury – even death.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) staff estimates that each year, about 2,000 injuries associated with electric extension cords are treated in hospital emergency rooms. More than half of the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions or sprains caused by people tripping over extension cords. Six percent of the injuries involve children less than five years of age.

Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

- If an extension cord is not marked for outdoor use, use it indoors only. The UL label will tell you if it is OK for outdoors.

- Inspect the cord before you use it. Look for areas that are cracked or frayed. If you find any, dispose of the cord.

Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

The appliance or tool that you are using the cord with will have a wattage rating on it. Match this up with your extension cord. Don't use a cord that has a lower rating

(volts x amps = watts).

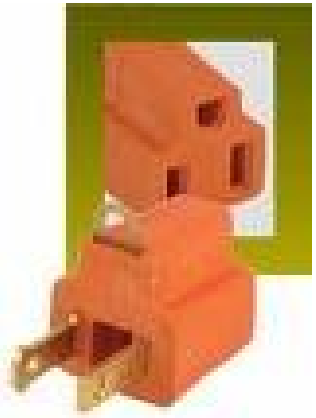
Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

- Don't run extension cords through doorways, or through holes in ceilings, walls or floors.
- Make sure the appliance or tool is off before you plug it into the cord.
- Make sure the plug is fully inserted in the outlet.

Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

- Don't remove, bend or modify any of the metal parts of the cord's plug.
- Don't plug a three-prong plug into a two-hole cord; use an adapter.

- Some cords are polarized; one hole on the plug is larger than the other. Match up the outlet and the cord.



Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

- During use:
  - Keep away from water.
  - Don't use it when it is wet.
  - Keep it away from children and pets.
  - Don't plug one extension cord into another.
  - Don't overheat the cord. Uncoil it, and don't cover it with anything.
  - Don't drive over the cord. Don't drag it or lay anything on it (like a carpet).
  - Don't walk on it.

Extension Cords: Do's and Don'ts

- After use:
  - Remove it from an outlet by pulling on the plug, not the cord.
  - Store it indoors.
- Unplug it when not in use.